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Ex-CIA agent lacks credibility

What some people won't do to sell a book.

Ralph McGeehee, a former low-level operative for the Central Intelligence Agency, spoke at Mankato State University last week and accused his former colleagues of equipping Korean Air Lines Flight 7 as a spy plane. Essentially, he blamed the U.S. government for the deaths of 269 people, killed when the Soviet Union shot down the unarmed passenger plane on Sept. 1.

Hogwash, balderdash and a few stronger invectives that come readily to mind.

McGeehee, on a cross-continent swing to promote his book, *Deadly Deceits: My 25 Years in the CIA*, should know better. If he is the savvy intelligence gatherer that he claims to be, he'd know that photographs taken from orbiting satellites produce much better results than pictures from passing planes. He would also know that if the U.S. wanted to test the Soviet's air defense system and response to border encroachment, Navy or Air Force reconnaissance planes could have accomplished the same thing without endangering the lives of 269 innocent people.

Worst of all, McGeehee acknowledges basing his asphemous opinion on nothing more than news

reports and his familiarity with the CIA. He has no "inside information" that would lead anyone to put stock in his statements.

By going on the college lecture circuit and trumpeting his book, McGeehee stands to become wealthy at the expense of U.S. intelligence agencies. Unfortunately, there are plenty of unsuspecting souls who will lap up McGeehee's rhetoric without stopping to sample it for authenticity.

People such as McGeehee who are disenchanted with international intelligence gathering and who fear that a CIA agent is behind every tree or under every rock, don't recognize that there's a legitimate need for spy missions. It is in this nation's best interest to anticipate what will happen around the globe, and to influence it in a manner that suits our needs. Lord knows, the Soviets have KGB agents masquerading as everything from sailors to journalists on every continent of the globe.

For whatever reason, McGeehee didn't like playing the CIA spy game, so he quit. Now, he's trying to create a new career through kiss-and-tell and false assumptions. He is without credibility, and his deduction that U.S. government actions led to the murder of the 269 people aboard Flight 7 doesn't deserve to be taken seriously.